

NAVAL WAR COLLEGE
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**LOGISTICAL CONTRACTORS ON THE PEACEKEEPING (PKO)
BATTLEFIELD: A GUIDE FOR THE OPERATIONAL COMMANDER**

By

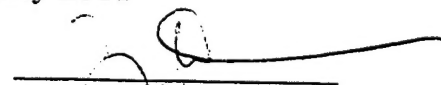
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The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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INTRODUCTION

Civilian contractors have played a critical role for centuries providing logistical service and support to Joint Task Force (JTF) Commanders. As the United States Armed Forces continue to capitalize on new technologies as part of the current Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA), the reliance on contractors to maintain equipment and support U.S. Forces will continue to increase. Soldiers, sailors, and airmen will have more advanced weapon systems, greater access to information, and increased quality of life. They will also share the battlefield with a greater number of civilian contractors.¹ Commanders at all levels must plan for and maximize the capabilities of these contractors throughout all operations.

With the demise of the Cold War threat came a shift in U.S. strategic thinking. The U.S. no longer plans to fight a major conventional conflict in the Fulda Gap, rather, the emphasis is now on preparing for two major theater wars and Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW), with Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) being the preponderant form of MOOTW.

The success of contractors on the PKO battlefield will require advance planning, continuous monitoring, and cooperation from the JTF Commander, his staff, and the contractor.² The intent of this paper is to focus the JTF Commander on the most prevalent problems associated with planning for and the subsequent integration of contractors during PKOs. The paper will analyze

¹ "More Civilians to get BDU's," Army Logistician, (March-April, 1994): 27.

² David L. Young, "Operational Planning for Contractors on the Battlefield," (Unpublished Research Paper, U.S. Naval War College, Newport, RI: 1998), 1.

these problems by looking at how commanders have performed in planning for and employing contractors in recent operations.

This paper will then address the main planning and execution issues that JTF Commanders must improve upon to enhance the logistical functions during future operations. These considerations include involving contractors into the planning phase, consolidating all contracting assets, and integrating contractors into the force flow. Understanding the capabilities and limitations associated with civilian contractors is also a vital consideration for the JTF Commander. This paper will provide several recommendations for JTF Commanders to set their Task Force up for success by properly planning for and employing logistical contractors on the PKO battlefield.

HISTORY OF CONTRACTORS ON THE BATTLEFIELD

Logistical contractors have provided supplies and services for American forces on the battlefield for as long as this great nation has existed. Since the American Revolution, commanders have depended on civilian contractors to fulfill the needs of their troops during all types of operations. These contractors provided a wide range of services from rations to housekeeping and in many cases were responsible for the military's success on the battlefield. This is not to say that contractors have never faltered, but for the most part they have

provided continuous support and have thus become an indispensable part of our forces warfighting and peacekeeping capability.³

“During World War II and the Vietnam War, one civilian supported every six soldiers. The ratio changed to 1 to 50 for the Persian Gulf, then rose to 1 to 10 in Bosnia”.⁴ At the conclusion of Vietnam, civilian contractors had established an acceptable means of augmenting logistical capabilities, especially during contingency operations conducted on short notice and usually conducted in the rear area of operations.⁵ These successes were again highlighted during Operation Desert Shield/Storm. Over 9,100 civilian contractors were deployed in support of operation Desert Storm⁶ in which they provided maintenance support on high-technology systems, acted as technical representatives for defense contractors, and provided other critical services to support U.S. and coalition forces.

The realization that each service would need to establish contractor programs to augment current logistical capabilities came with the success of contractor support in the Gulf War. The Army was the first to adopt such a program in 1992 called the Logistics Civil Augmentation Program (LOGCAP). The program was designed to formalize relationships with civilian contractors to increase the effectiveness of logistical support on the battlefield and during contingency operations. “The Navy awarded the Construction Capabilities Contract

³ Charles R. Shrader, “Contractors on the Battlefield,” *Landpower Essay Series, AUSA, No. 99-6* (May 1999): 1

⁴ Charles G. Chiarotti, “Joint Contractor Logistics Support Doctrine: Ensuring Success on the 21st Battlefield,” (Unpublished Research Paper, U.S. Naval War College, Newport, RI: 2000), 3-4.

⁵ Shrader, 10.

⁶ General Accounting Office, *DoD Force Mix Issues, Report to Congress*, (Washington, DC: 1994), 5.

(CONCAP) in 1995 and the Air Force followed suit with the Air Force Contractor Augmentation Program (AFCAP) contract in 1997".⁷

Just as each service came to realize how important civilian contractors are to any operation, JTF Commanders of today must ask not whether they need to use civilian contractors during PKOs, but how to use them with maximum effectiveness and efficiency. It will be extremely important to integrate civilians from the start of an operation during the planning phase and to continue to emphasize that they are an integral element in the equation throughout the execution of the operation.⁸

CURRENT EFFORT

One way to substantiate the argument that contractors on the battlefield will continue to increase would be to look at current efforts with civilian contractors currently in Bosnia and Kosovo. "One of the success stories of Operation Joint Guard in Bosnia-Herzegovina has been the evolution of contracted logistics support through the LOGCAP."⁹ The preplanning for contractors as part of the Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan (JSCP) is what allowed the first civilians operating in Bosnia to only be one half hour behind the combat units in 1997. Within weeks the contractors had transformed the area into a base camp and provided hot food, showers, latrines and living quarters for deserving American

⁷ Maria J. Dowling and Vincent J. Feck, "Feasibility of a Joint Engineering and Logistics Contract," Air Command and Staff College Wright Flyer Paper No. 7, (September 1999): V

⁸ Schrader, 13.

⁹ Darrel A. Williamson, "Contracted Logistics in Bosnia," Army Logistician, May-June 1998: <http://www.almc.army.mil/alog/may-jun98/ms286.htm> [12 December 2000].

soldiers.¹⁰ The civil augmentation programs along with contingency contracting and Host Nation Support (HNS) all augmented the military's ability to execute the PKO mission in Bosnia while reducing the costs and lowering the number of engineer and logistic soldiers deployed.

The responsiveness of the contractors in the Balkans has been vital to the success of the contracted logistics support. However, there were key weaknesses in the planning efforts that were identified by the General Accounting Office (GAO) report on Bosnia for contracted logistics. The report concluded that despite the efforts to effectively manage LOGCAP, U.S. Army Europe officials and commanders were inexperienced and lacked an understanding of the contract. The GAO found that the contractor's capabilities and poor program management created problems during deployment and resulted in unnecessary costs.¹¹ Although these weaknesses were eventually overcome, they were not properly planned for from the beginning in Bosnia.

As part of the current effort, the JTF Commander should first understand what types of contractor support are available for them to employ. Contractor support falls into three broad categories:

1. Systems Support Contractors logistically support deployed operational forces under prearranged contracts awarded by service program managers or by

¹⁰ Herman T. Palmer, "More Tooth, Less Tail: Contractors in Bosnia," *Army Logistician*. Sep-Oct 1999: <http://www.almc.army.mil/alog/sepoct99/ms408.htm> [12 December 2000].

¹¹ General Accounting Office, Contingency Operations: Opportunities to Improve the Logistics Civil Augmentation Program, Report to Congressional Requesters (Washington, D.C.: February 1997), 14.

military service component logistic commands.¹² As the name suggests, these contractors provide maintenance and technical support to a number of systems within the Department of Defense (DoD) inventory.

2. External Theater Support Contractors work pursuant to contracts awarded under the command and procurement authority of supporting headquarters outside the theater and provide support for deployed operational forces. These contracts are prearranged, but may be modified to meet the commander's needs. As discussed earlier, examples include the Army's LOGCAP, the Air Force's AFCAP, and the Navy's CONCAP contracts.¹³

3. Theater Support Contractors sustain deployed operational forces in accordance with contracts arranged within the mission area, or prearranged contracts through HNS and local vendors.¹⁴ When this type of contract is needed the JTF Commander should task the senior logistician to facilitate the process along with the senior contracting officer in theater.

PLANNING FOR CONTRACTORS

"The DoD components shall rely on the most effective mix of the total force, cost and other factors considered, including active, reserve, civilian, Host Nation (HN), and contract resources necessary to fulfill assigned peacetime and

¹² Joint Chiefs of Staff, Doctrine for Logistic Support of Joint Operations, Joint Pub 4-0 (Washington, DC: 6 April 2000), V-1.

¹³ Joint Publication 4-0, V-2.

¹⁴ Ibid.

wartime missions.”¹⁵ Contracting support on the PKO battlefield is an integral part of the overall process used to obtain supplies and services in support of operations.

The first principle the commander should understand is that in a joint or multinational environment the consolidation of contracting assets is needed to achieve maximum operational efficiency and economy. Although there is very little joint doctrine covering contractors on the battlefield, Joint Publication 4-0, Doctrine for Logistic Support of Joint Operations, does devote one chapter to contractors in the theater. The key for the JTF Commander is to ensure that their senior logisticians and contracting officers fully integrate, in the logistics plans and orders, the functions performed by contractors and plan for contingency arrangements if a contractor either fails or is not permitted to perform the required service.¹⁶ In many cases the environment and current conditions in the area of operations (AO) will prohibit the use of contractors as originally planned. This could happen prior to or at any point during the operation.

Adequate, practical planning is essential to the success of contracting support and is an essential part of the environment for both the operational planner and contracting manager. Planning for contracting support follows the same process as other planning, and is part of both the Deliberate and Crisis Action Planning (CAP) processes. Properly included in the planning process, logistical

¹⁵ Department of Defense, Continuation of Essential Contractor Services During Crisis DODI 3020.37. (Washington, DC: 1990), 15.

¹⁶ Joint Publication 4-0, V-3.

contracting personnel will advise the commander how to best leverage the support provided.¹⁷

To properly incorporate all the planners into the process the JTF Commander should establish a Joint Acquisition Board (JAB), which consists of contracting officers from each service and hopefully a contractor representative. The JAB can ensure that the consolidation of contracts is maximized and can continue to validate contracts during the execution of the operation. Two JAB's were eventually established, one at the Intermediate Staging Base (ISB) in Hungary and another one at Task Force Eagle in Bosnia. These JAB's performed extremely well and should have been formed during the planning phase.

The second primary consideration or principle is to have the civilian contractor involved in the planning process. Because the intent is to focus the commander on PKOs, External and Theater Support Contractors will most likely be the type of contractor on the team. One of the advantages of the External Theater Support Contractor, such as the Army's LOGCAP, is that the contractor is awarded a five year contract and the JTF Commander and planners can establish a rapport with their logistic contractors during deliberate planning and exercises.¹⁸

JTF Commanders must find a way to incorporate these contractors into the task force prior to the execution of an operation. One possible solution is the use of LNO's coming from the JTF staff to the contractor and from the contractor to

¹⁷ U.S. Army, Contracting Support on the Battlefield, (FM 100-10-2) (Washington, DC: 1999) 3-1.

¹⁸ Young, 7.

the JTF. The bottom line is that in the future JTF Commanders must integrate contractors into the operational planning teams. Taking the time to ensure this takes place up front will only enhance operations and provide uninterrupted logistic support to the task force.

One final consideration during the planning stage is to integrate the civilian contractors into the force flow. This starts by having the contracting officer look at the contract to see if the contractor is self-sufficient in moving both their personnel and equipment. Contractors with a large work force and a lot of equipment to transport can charter their own aircraft or surface vessels and not compete with U.S. forces for strategic lift.¹⁹ If not, they will have to be integrated into the Time-Phased Force and Deployment Data (TPFDD) and process through some form of Preparation for Overseas Movement (POM) along with the military units.

Whether contractors flow through the TPFDD on government transportation or they are told to find their own ride, they must be provided space to disembark in the theater. Planners cannot simply tell contractors "to make it happen" when the military controls all of the Airports of Debarkation (APODs) and/or Seaports of Debarkation (SPODs) in the theater.²⁰ All contractor personnel entering the AO must be received, staged, moved onward, and integrated (RSO&I) by military personnel.²¹

¹⁹ Young, 7.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Joe A. Fortner, "Managing, Deploying, Sustaining, and Protecting Contractors on the Battlefield," Army Logistician, (September-October, 2000) : 4

The overall goal of the commander during the planning process is to ensure they have visibility of all contracting operations. The commander must maintain situational awareness of contractor personnel, equipment, and operations.²² By developing a simplistic organizational structure with unity of command over contractor personnel, the commander can get a handle on and understand exactly what these contractors can and cannot do.²³

CAPABILITIES

By now JTF Commanders understand that contractors are forever more part of the team, but the next issue is what these contractors can do for the team. Some of the advantages of contractor support are more evident than others. One of the most evident is a reduction in the number of soldiers used to provide support missions. Soldiers who otherwise would be engaged in performing important support missions can be freed immediately for redeployment or for assignment to other missions within the AO.²⁴ With U.S. forces at one of the lowest manning levels in history, using contractors to reduce the number of soldiers who must deploy can also be perceived as a method to affect the OPTEMPO of our forces. When service members deploy frequently and for long periods of time, it degrades their quality of life significantly and, ultimately, impacts training and readiness.²⁵

²² Fortner, 4.

²³ Young, 13.

²⁴ Palmer, 4.

²⁵ Fortner, 14.

As the number of soldiers, sailors, and airmen based in the Continental United States (CONUS) continues to grow, these same contractors can influence the rate at which forces arrive in theater. If these contractors are Theater Support Contractors, they provide an in-place capability that does not have to be deployed, and any capability that can be obtained in theater saves the commander valuable time during deployment operations.²⁶

Another advantage, which is often overlooked, is a reduction in the cost associated with utilizing contractors versus a military equivalent. In many cases the service member is part of the National Guard or Reserves and the costs associated to activate and deploy these combat support and combat service support personnel can eventually be higher than using a civilian contractor.

Another benefit that cannot afford to be overlooked is these contractors may be the only source of high-tech, low-density skills available. The Army in particular has reached the point where it no longer can afford to maintain the training infrastructure for these skills that only require a few dozen soldiers Army wide. Such skills are readily available from system contractors and in many cases come with a major weapon system.²⁷

Another advantage of using contractors in a PKO is not quite so evident as those mentioned above. When the contractor hires local civilians, contractor support becomes a political tool for putting hard-pressed local nationals back to work in what is frequently a depressed economy. Case in point is the use of

²⁶ Fortner, 14.

²⁷ Ibid.

contract labor in support of the PKO mission in Bosnia. This produced a definite economic impact on the region secured by U.S. forces and supported a basic pillar in the operational commander's strategic campaign plan.²⁸

LIMITATIONS

As part of the planning process the commander should also be aware of the risks and limitations associated with contractors and how they will impact the commander's use of contracting support. The first limitations are those produced by applicable laws. There are three basic functions that contractors by U.S. Law, cannot perform. The first is armed combat. The United States does not contract out its warfighting; the second function the contractor cannot perform is command or control of any U.S. military personnel; lastly the DoD cannot hire contractors to hire other contractors.²⁹

The real crux of the matter is that three main bodies of law can influence a contractor: International, HN, and U.S. Law. During Operation Joint Endeavor in Bosnia, the LOGCAP contractor did not realize that a HN tax law existed and that it would cost them over \$18 million dollars.³⁰ Commanders must ensure that Judge Advocate or legal counsel is consulted early on and is involved in the planning and reviews all OPLANs, OPODs and contracts to ensure complete compliance with various international, U.S. and HN laws, treaties, or standing agreements.

²⁸ Palmer, 4-5.

²⁹ Fortner, 14.

³⁰ Young, 5.

A second risk for the commander is not knowing how prepared the contractor is to perform the mission given to them. When a commander receives a military unit he can expect them to be well trained, properly resourced, and capable of performing their mission. His assurance comes from the system that ensures that military units are monitored on a continuous basis for mission readiness. In contrast, there is no such system currently in place to monitor contractor readiness.

Closely associated with the previous risk is the contractors' commitment to the mission. The contractor may be capable of performing the mission, but the civilians on the ground may lack the dedication desired. The bottom line for them could be that they will get paid for their services no matter how well they perform.

Protecting the lives of the contractors' is another key limitation and risk the commander must plan for if the contract terms place the responsibility upon DoD. The government's responsibility for providing force protection to contractors derives from three factors: A legal responsibility to provide a safe work environment, a contractual responsibility that is stipulated in most contracts, and a practical responsibility to allow contractors to do their job.³¹ The takeaway for the JTF Commander is that contractor personnel are vulnerable to threats and they depend upon military units to provide for their protection.

³¹ Young, 6.

One final limitation is the command and control the commander has over the contractor. Commanders have no direct authority or command and control over contractors. The contractor, through the terms of the employee and employer relationship, disciplines contract employees. Commanders have no penal authority to compel contractor personnel to perform their duties or to punish any acts of misconduct.³² Because contractors are governed by a separate chain of command, commanders do not have the authority to order contractors to perform any action that is not covered by the scope of the contract. This murky command and control issue reduces flexibility and responsiveness in many cases. To counter this the commander must be familiar and knowledgeable about the contract process, and ensure their contracting officer and JAB are able to adapt to constantly changing situations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Along with the understanding that logistical contractors on the PKO battlefield will play a larger role in the future, it will be imperative that the JTF Commander prepare early in the planning process for their use. With the absence of any formal joint doctrine on logistical contractors, the following recommendations will provide the JTF Commander a starting point for their use:

Always have an alternate plan prepared in the event that the contractor is unable to perform the mission. Contractors are to only augment the current

³² Joint Publication 4-0, V-8.

force structure, not replace it. The JTF Commander can use the JAB to ensure that each service represented in the JTF is not reliant on the private sector for sustainment of their forces. Planners must weigh the likelihood that contractors will not be allowed or able to enter the theater at the start of an operation. The initial plan for the invasion of Haiti called for a forced entry and the planners were told that no civilians would be allowed into the theater until a certain phase of the operation. In some cases only when the AO becomes mature and increasingly stable will the JTF commander incorporate contractors into the force structure.³³

Utilize Civil Augmentation Contracts if at all possible. These contracts provide numerous benefits to include preplanning as part of the JSCP, provides its own strategic and in-theater lift capability, and they have performed extremely well in recent operations. It would also allow for expanded training exercises, which would include these contractors. The Army's LOGCAP Program Manager's Office currently has 28 plans on the shelf that address the needs of every unified commander in chief and can be incorporated into training exercises at any time. If civilian contractors are going to deploy with soldiers, then they should be wholly included in training exercises. Although this is done with some Civil Augmentation Programs today, there is plenty of room for improvement. The JTF Commander will begin to develop a comfort that the contractor is part of the team and can be counted on to complete their mission.

³³ Young, 3.

Stand up a JAB during the planning phase and prior to deployment. The JTF Commander must have full visibility of all contractors participating in the operation in order to phase capabilities of the different services, as the situation dictates to support the plan. The establishment of a JAB, which is chartered by the Principal Assistant Responsible for Contracting (PARC) to manage, deconflict, and integrate contractor and JTF Commander's requirements can accomplish this. The PARC is normally the senior logistician or contracting officer on the JTF staff. The JTF Commander is responsible to convene the JAB to provide input into the contracting priorities and allocation of resources. The board also should produce a contracting support plan and provide continuous updates to the commander. As a result the JAB would be responsible for ensuring a seamless integration of logistics capabilities.³⁴ The sooner this board is up and running the sooner the commander can focus on other critical warfighting issues.

CONCLUSION

Logistic contractors for PKOs are here to stay and will continue to play larger roles in logistical support of the JTF in the years ahead. With the reliance on these contractors comes the responsibility to plan for, deploy, integrate, and then allow for the execution of what the contractor is there to accomplish. Commanders will quickly realize that unless they properly incorporate the use of logistical contractors into the OPLAN/OPORD, they will degrade the overall success of the mission. Contractors are a valuable asset to the JTF commander

³⁴ Chiarotti, 13.

and they must capitalize on their strengths and minimize their limitations in supporting American forces. A smart place for the commander to start is with the Army's new Field Manual titled "Contractors on the Battlefield". FM 100-10-2 is designed to assist commanders in identifying requirements and planning to facilitate procurement of services by contractors on the battlefield, to include joint operations. The Army is leading the way in doctrine development for contractors in the future, and the JTF Commander should capitalize on the Army's success in doctrine development.

The JTF Commander must also be prepared to have logistical contractors in the forward area of the battlefield during combat situations. With proper planning, contractors will continue to enhance operations no matter what type of operation they are involved in. They are indeed the "Wave of the Future".

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